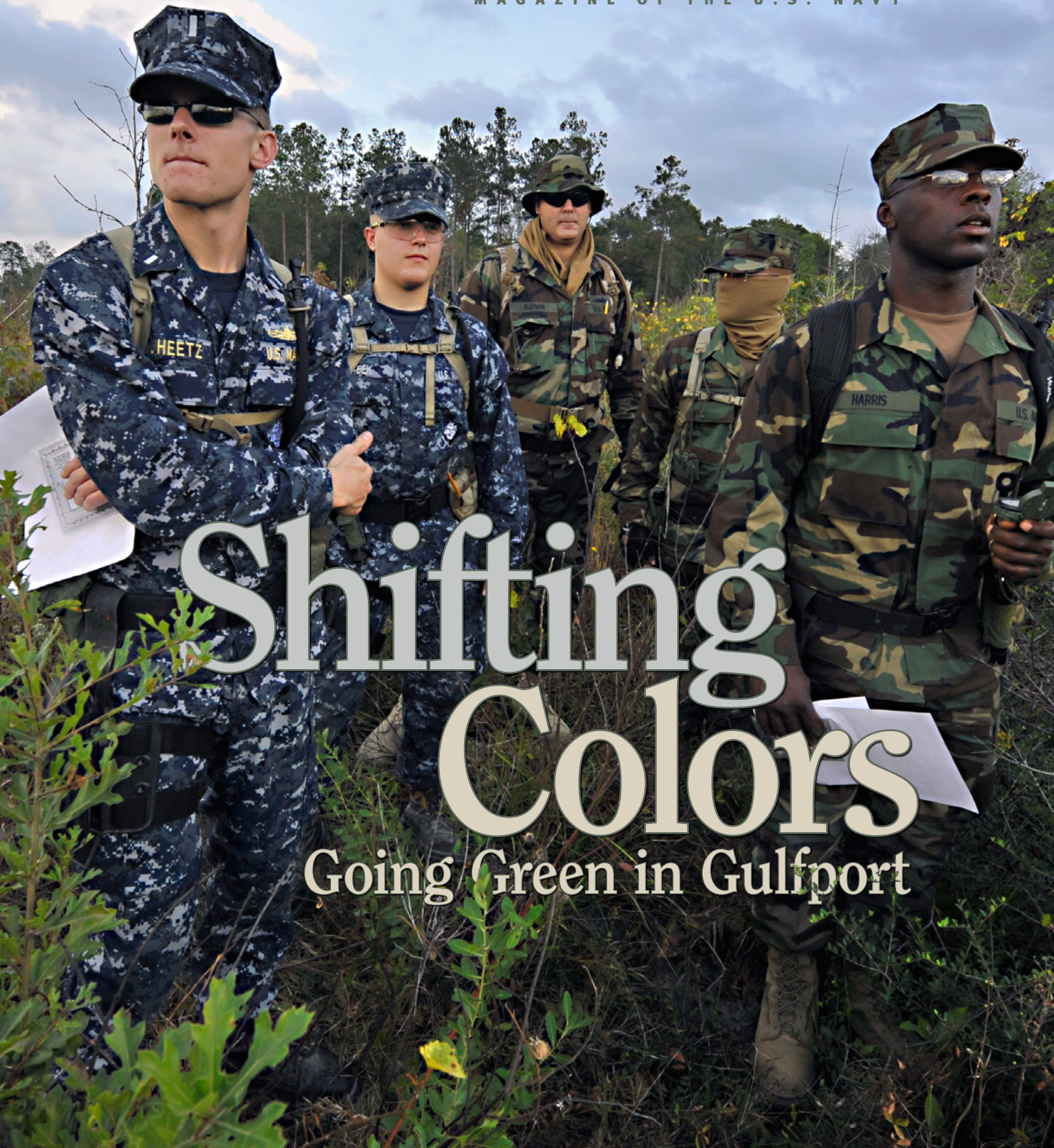


FEBRUARY 2011

ALLHANDS

MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. NAVY



Shifting Colors

Going Green in Gulfport



[On the Front Cover]
Students attending the Expeditionary Combat Skills Course take what they learned in the class room out to this densely wooded area of Southern Mississippi, where they must plot several locations on a map then navigate from point to point using a few basic tools such as a map, compass and protractor.

Photo by MC1 R.Jason Brunson



The Fleet's Basketball Team

The All-Navy Basketball team is built from the operational Navy, an entity comprised of deckplate Sailors from military installations all over the world. With days beginning at 7:30 a.m., and finishing at 10 p.m., potential 2010 All-Navy Basketball Team members, both male and female, endure a rigorous tryout schedule at Halsey Field House at the U.S. Naval Academy.

Photo by MC1 Joseph Garza



America's Navy A 21st Century Leader

The elevated causeway system-modular, or ELCAS(M) is able to be built to a length of up to 3,000 feet, and affords the arrival, assembly, supply, sustainment and reconstitution from a port or airfield to units at sea. Recently more than 200 Seabees installed a 720-foot ELCAS(M) at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, Va.

Photo by MC2 Meranda Keller

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Shifting Colors Going Green at Gulfport

Although saving Mother Earth is important for most of us, the term “Going Green” has a slightly different meaning for Sailors reporting to Navy Expeditionary Combat Command for the first time. To these Sailors, it’s a mindset shift from the typical “blue water” Navy way of thinking to a more ground combat mindset. This process begins at the Expeditionary Combat Skills course aboard Naval Construction Battalion Center Gulfport, Miss.

Photo by MC1 R. Jason Brunson

[Next Month]
All Hands visits with the occupants of the newest Fisher House at National Naval Medical Center Bethesda, Md., and takes a look at enlisted housing in San Diego.



AEAN John Fisher shovels snow in front of USS *Constitution*, the world's oldest commissioned warship afloat.
Photo by SN Shannon Heavin



Chiefs: Your Role in Shaping Your Rating

Shipmates,

Imagine that every Sailor who has taken a rating exam has wondered: ‘Who writes these questions?’ Or, ‘Where did THAT question come from?’ Well, everyone in the chiefs’ mess should be able to say: ‘Those questions came from me!’

The Navy’s enlisted advancement exams are developed by a panel of chief petty officers from each rating who serve as fleet subject matter experts (FSME). FSMEs are drawn from commands throughout the fleet, including the schoolhouses and learning centers. This team of experts brings fleet experience to the table, which improves the ability to maintain current exam content in the Navy Advancement Center’s (NAC) exam question banks.

Chief petty officers, who attend advancement exam development conferences (AEDC), held once every two years, are pushed to achieve a very aggressive schedule with the goal of updating 5,000 or more questions for each rating. They also plan and produce quality exams designed to enable the Navy to accurately rank-order qualified candidates for advancement based on Sailors’ final multiple scores (FMS). The Sailor with the highest FMS score for a particular rating is No. 1 for advancement.

Exams are part of the advancement formula or FMS, for all fully qualified and promotion-eligible

Sailors. E-4 through E-6 FMSs are derived from several factors including performance evaluations, current exam score, past exam performance, education level, length of service and awards.

The FMS for first class petty officers eligible for advancement to CPO are comprised of performance evaluations and current exam score only. Advancements are based on vacancies, so the NAC’s ability to rank-order Sailors is central to the Navy’s enlisted advancement system.

The NAC uses a special type of exam which allows candidates to be rank-ordered by comparing one Sailor’s exam score against the scores of all other Sailors in the same rating. FSMEs are challenged to write questions meeting the statistical standards for this type of exam. Each question an FSME approves must do a good job of objectively assessing the application of rating-specific knowledge.

Valid exam content is established by ensuring each question is clearly tied to a current rating occupational standard, with information garnered from the Navy Enlisted Occupational Classification System. These standards define minimum skill and knowledge requirements for enlisted personnel at each pay grade and within each career field.

An off-year AEDC review is done by a single subject matter expert. Funding for Sailors to travel to the AEDCs is provided by the NAC and the conferences are held at the Naval Education and Training Professional Development and Technology Center, Pensacola, Fla.

We need the best chiefs to attend AEDCs. In many ways, enlisted exams are very similar to our enlisted selection boards. Our goal is to advance the right Sailor, and I’m confident our current system does just that. I expect every command to support the AEDC process and encourage their best chiefs to put in packages for individual rating AEDCs.

A NAVADMIN is released twice each year that lists upcoming AEDCs and the process for submitting a package to attend an AEDC. Application forms and additional requirements are available on the Navy Advancement Center Web site at <https://www.nko.navy.mil/portal/careermanagement/navyadvancementcenter>.

Every chief who participates in an AEDC gives detailed feedback on their participation, and without exception, fleet input has been that this is an invaluable experience.

Chiefs, this is your chance to have direct and tangible input toward shaping your community and our great Navy.

HOOYAH! AH

ALL HANDS

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Navy Workforce Programs Gain National Recognition

Competing against Fortune 500 companies, the U.S. Navy earned 15 national awards in 2010 for workforce management, training, diversity and life-work balance.

Representing a significant increase in the second year of efforts to showcase the Navy as an employer of choice, this year's award winners come from both large and small commands, as well as units in the United States and overseas.

"These awards confirm something I have known throughout my service - that our Navy is dedicated to improving the lives of our Sailors," said Vice Adm. Mark Ferguson, chief of naval personnel. "The commands and programs receiving these awards highlight a small fraction of the policies and programs Navy employs to attract, train and retain the nation's best and brightest."

FY10 began with the Navy winning Workforce Management Magazine's Optimas Award in "General Excellence." As the first in DoD and the second government agency to win the award in 19 years, the Navy joined past winners such as Google, Hewlett-Packard and AT&T. By providing competitive pay, flexible career options and innovative programs such as Credentialing Opportunities Online and assignment incentive pay, the Navy established itself as a leader in workforce management.

In the area of training, the Navy took home eight separate awards in 2010, including entering Training Magazine's "Top 125" list at No. 17, the second highest initial entry in that award's history. Some of the Navy training programs nationally recognized in 2010 include Professional Apprenticeship Career Tracks, Voluntary Education and Language Skills, Regional Expertise and Cultural Awareness. Each of these programs represent Navy's goal of providing Sailors with the training and skills needed to be successful during their military careers and beyond.

"Education and training opportunities are some of the most important factors Sailors take into account when deciding to join the Navy," explained Mr. Scott Lutterloh, director, Training and Education Division. "Our goal is to provide the best and most flexible opportunities for our workforce to gain the expertise needed to prepare them for the challenges of today and tomorrow."

The Navy was also honored as an organization dedicated to diversity during the second quarter of FY10. Diversity Inc. Magazine recognized the Navy as a top federal agency for excellence in leadership commitment, human capital, communications and diversity.

The Association of Diversity Councils also selected the Navy as the eighth Best Diversity Council in the United States. Diversity/Careers in Engineering and Information Technology Magazine described the Navy as a forward looking company that values and supports diversity in the technical workforce, and BDPA.com and WorkplaceDiversity.com declared Navy was one of 14 companies excelling in community outreach, diversity recruiting programs and promoting significant numbers of African-Americans into the information technology management ranks.

"The awards reflect Navy's goal of providing the fleet with the best training, flexible work environments and a talented and diverse workforce. Looking to the future, we must continue to excel in these areas in order to be an employer of choice and compete with the civilian market for the nation's best talent," said Ferguson.



Photo by MCC Tiffini Jones Vanderwyst

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Gary Roughead (left) thanks Sailors and Navy civilians in the personnel community receiving the Optimas Award in General Excellence for being an integral part of DoN. The award recognizes the Navy's continued commitment to developing innovative initiatives that promote a total force.

For more information on Navy's "Top 50" awards program, visit www.npc.navy.mil/AboutUs/BUPERS/Top50/. **AH**

Story Courtesy of Chief of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C.

MCPON Stresses Do Your Part for 'Zero Tolerance' on Sexual Assault

Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (SS/SW) Rick D. West recently released the following message on sexual assault released to the fleet: "Shipmates,

As we focus on priorities for 2011, I'd like to address a subject that is affecting our great Navy, and that is sexual assault.

It is incomprehensible that a shipmate would commit such a horrible crime to another shipmate. Sexual assault in our Navy undermines teamwork, morale, unit cohesion and operational readiness. Also, the long-term effects of sexual assault dramatically impact the victim for years to come.

For these reasons, sexual assault does not belong in our Navy. We have a 'zero tolerance' policy for this criminal offense and it is each and every Sailor's responsibility to adhere to this policy and do your part to alleviate this crime within our ranks.

At the close of 2010, reports of sexual assault increased from last year, which could be attributed to victims' increased willingness to report the crime, but data also shows that sexual assaults are still occurring in our Navy. The highest risk group for victims during the past several fiscal years remains E-1 to E-4, ages 20 to 24, with most incidents occurring during the weekends. In most sexual assault incidents, alcohol was a major factor impairing the judgment of predators, victims and bystanders.

Additionally, the most common sexual assault scenarios include off-base parties, hotel rooms, barracks, night clubs and bars during liberty. Simply put, sexual assault knows no boundaries and the majority of victims know their offender.

Sexual assault is a personal crime and we should all take it personally and think, 'What if it was my sister/brother, my son/daughter or my

wife/husband?' Wouldn't you do everything in your power to protect them? That's how we should think about our shipmates — we are a Navy family, we rely on each other every day. Shipmates should be looking out for shipmates and getting involved when you see someone starting to steer into danger.

To remove sexual assault from our Navy we need to ensure commands have a strong partnership with Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARC) and a robust Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program which fosters an environment where 'shipmates help shipmates' by not allowing destructive behavior to occur.

One of the ways to encourage the idea of 'shipmates helping shipmates' is through the Coalition of Sailors Against Destructive Decisions (CSADD) peer mentoring program. The Navy launched the CSADD program June 24 with the focus on helping junior Sailors make better decisions.

CSADD's mission is:

- To provide Sailors with the best prevention and intervention tools possible to deal with the issues of drinking, reckless driving and other destructive decisions while maintaining good order and discipline;
- To assist Sailors in making life decisions that will maintain positive lifestyles in keeping with the Navy's core values;
- To guide Sailors away from making poor and destructive decisions by providing them with positive and dynamic training; and to show Sailors how to make quick positive decisions and put their training to use in moments of high stress and peer pressure.

Every command is encouraged to start a CSADD chapter with Sailors in the age group of 18 to 25 and enable them to take on a leadership role within their CSADD chapter. For more information on starting a CSADD chapter, see OPNAVINST 1500.80 Coalition of Sailors Against Destructive Decisions Peer Mentoring Program, or the CSADD Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Coalition-of-Sailors-Against-Destructive-Decisions-CSADD/299642495316.

We must continue to promote a positive command climate based on our Navy core values and ethos to defend against sexual assault and continue to promote responsible, personal behavior. Eliminating sexual assault from our Navy is an all hands effort, and I am confident that each of you will step up and take on this charge for the betterment of our Navy. Everyday you're making a difference and working hard in all corners of the world. YOU can put a stop to this crime!" **AH**

Story courtesy of Naval Personnel Command, Millington, Tenn.

CPPD Debuts Command Fitness Leader Web Page on NKO

The Center for Personal and Professional Development (CPPD) recently opened its new Command Fitness Leader (CFL) page on Navy Knowledge Online.

The Web page was designed to provide a centralized point of access to current information and curriculum updates for all Commander Navy Installations Command CFL instructors.

"The new CFL page will provide up-to-date information via a single point of access. This page will ensure continuity in CFL program details, requirements and updates and is laid out in a user-friendly design ensuring ease of use for commands, fitness leaders and Sailors," said Capt. Chuck Hollingsworth, CPPD's commanding officer.

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Photo by MC L. Elena Perence

EOD1 John M. Kremer speaks with Vice Adm. Richard W. Hunt, commander of U.S. 3rd Fleet, after an awards ceremony where he received the Purple Heart.

San Diego Area Sailor Receives Purple Heart

Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician 1st Class John M. Kremer was presented the Purple Heart by Vice Adm. Richard W. Hunt, Commander, U.S. 3rd Fleet during a recent ceremony at Naval Base Point Loma, Calif. Kremer was recognized for injuries he sustained while in Afghanistan.

Kremer was injured Sept. 17, 2010, when he stepped on a landmine while he and his team, assigned to Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit (EODMU) 1, were clearing a hilltop for follow-on forces. Kremer's injuries necessitated the amputation of both legs below the knee.

"When we have a casualty like this," said Hunt, "it is always in the line of duty. It is leading. It is unquestionable self-sacrifice. I thank Petty Officer Kremer for that, and his nation thanks him for that."

According to Kremer, "It is an honor to have a three-star admiral come and give me an award. This is not an award everyone wants to get. It just happened that I got it in Afghanistan."

Kremer, an Ohio native and seven-year Navy veteran, said he cannot wait to get back to work with his unit, EODMU 1. After returning from Afghanistan and completing more than two months of rehabilitation, he reenlisted for a four-year commitment in front of his friends.

"It's [great] to come back to the unit and be around the guys," Kremer said. "I definitely want to get back and do the job again; hopefully in the next year or so."

The Purple Heart is the oldest military decoration being awarded and was designed by Gen. George Washington during the American Revolution. **AH**

Story by MC2 Josh Cassatt, Navy Public Affairs Support Element West, San Diego.



Photo by MC2 James R. Evans



Photo by MCSN Zachary David

AEAN Joseph Clemson troubleshoots electronics on an SH-60F *Sea Hawk* helicopter aboard USS *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70).

At top—
MM3 Tyrell Watkins fills a canister of liquid nitrogen for medical use in the forward O2N2 plant aboard USS *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70).



Photo by MC2 Milho Park



Photo by MC3 Elisandro Diaz

GSMFN Yorvania Lightbourn conducts preventive maintenance on a propulsion engine aboard USS *O'Kane* (DDG 77).

At top—
AOAN Christina Kelly relaxes a moment during a break in flight operations aboard USS *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75).

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The Web page will include a library of CFL instructions, naval administrative messages, class schedules, quota application processes and Physical Readiness Information Management Systems training videos.

The page also contains new training tools developed by CPPD for CFLs, such as body composition assessments, examples of proper form and technique for various exercises and a multimedia section entitled, “Improving your Physical Readiness Test Scores.”

All content on the CFL page has been approved by the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations’ Physical Readiness Program Office (N-135) in support of the Navy’s Physical Readiness Program in an effort to emphasize the importance of the Navy’s commitment in creating a culture of fitness.

For more information about the Navy’s CFL program, visit <https://www.nko.navy.mil/portal/personaldevelopment/home/CommandFitnessLeader/>.

For more information about CPPD, visit <https://www.netc.navy.mil/centers/cppd/>. **AH**

Story by Susan Lawson, Center for Personal and Professional Development, Virginia Beach, Va.

NPC Launches New Records Review Tool: OMPF-Command View

According to recently released NAVADMIN 398/10, command leaders can now view their service members’ Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) with OMPF-Command View, a new tool launched on BUPERS Online (BOL) by Navy Personnel Command (NPC).

According to Kathy Wardlaw, NPC records management and benefits division director, 83 percent of paper enlisted field service records have already been closed out, and OMPF-Command View fulfills the need for commands to review those records electronically.

“OMPF-Command View offers, those with a need to know, secure access to service record documents not contained in the Electronic Service Record (ESR), such as enlistment documents, performance evaluations, DD-214 discharge certificates and others,” Wardlaw said. “While much of the data itself is contained in ESR, OMPF-Command View combined with ESR Command View, gives command leaders the tools needed to review a Sailor’s information found in the old field service record of both officers and enlisted.”

“In the past, the paper service records had to be pulled from the personnel department records vault to review them,” said Chief Personnel Specialist Carol T. Fister, NPC records management policy branch senior enlisted advisor. “The OMPF and ESR Command View applications together make service record review more secure and convenient. Sailors’ records can now be accessed and viewed online.

“Personnel data is secure with both command view tools,” Fister said. “Not just anyone can look at a Sailor’s records. Access is limited to those with a legitimate need to view the Sailors’ records and the command controls who has access.”

Command leadership will have immediate access to OMPF-Command View. The command will also be responsible for delegating user access to others in the command, such as the command career counselor.

Personnel and customer support detachments and other commands without a typical command structure will need to request access to OMPF-Command View. The OMPF user guide, that outlines the request process, is posted on the NPC website at www.npc.navy.mil/careerinfo/recordsmanagement/ompf_cmdview.htm.

OMPF-Command View is accessible via BUPERS Online at <https://www.bol.navy.mil>. Questions from the fleet about OMPF-Command View can be addressed

by the NPC Customer Service Center toll-free at (866) 827-5672.

ESR Command View, which has been available for more than four years, gives command leadership secure online access to personnel data in the ESR in a manner similar to OMPF-Command View.

“ESR Command View is a popular and successful tool for commands,” said Art Tate, Navy Standard Integrated Personnel System (NSIPS)/ESR implementation manager. “With ESR Command View, leadership can review items in their Sailors’ ESR such as Page 2 dependency data, emergency contact information, professional history, training, education, qualifications and much more.”

ESR Command View can be accessed online through NSIPS at <https://nsips.nmci.navy.mil>. Questions regarding ESR Command View can be answered by calling the NSIPS help desk toll-free at (877) 589-5991 or e-mail nsipshelpdesk@navy.mil. **AH**

Story courtesy of Navy Personnel Command, Millington, Tenn.

Passport, Visa Required for Bahrain Duty

A change in the DoD Foreign Clearance Guide now requires military and civilian personnel and eligible family members moving to Bahrain to get a no-fee passport (red cover) and visa.

According to DoD’s Electronic Foreign Clearance Guide, available at <https://www.fcg.pentagon.mil/fcg.cfm>, updated Sept. 14, military and civilian personnel and eligible family members must possess a no-fee passport valid for at least six months beyond the date of arrival in Bahrain and obtain a visa prior to traveling to Bahrain.

“Passports can take up to six months to process,” said Cmdr. Carl Chaffin, Distribution Management and Procedures branch head. “Upon receiving permanent change

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Photo by MC3 Bryan Blair



Photo by Lance Cpl. Marianne T. Mangrum

HMC David Worrell treats an Afghan child during a village medical outreach project in Boldak, Afghanistan.

Above—
An MH-53 *Sea Stallion* helicopter assigned to the Vanguard of Mine Countermeasures Squadron (HM) 14 prepares to shutdown its engines as another *Sea Stallion* helicopter lands aboard USS *Denver* (LPD 9).

From top right—
MA1 Angel Fernandez, embarked aboard the *Swift* (HSV 2), speaks with a Chilean woman during a community service project as part of *Southern Partnership Station 2011*.

MM3 Waheed Adeshina verifies and updates information in the ship's engineering manuals aboard USS *Bonhomme Richard* (LHD 6).



Photo by MC2 Ricardo J. Reyes



Photo by MCC Joe Kane

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of station orders or a letter of intent, Sailors need to immediately go to their servicing personnel support detachment to start the process.”

Policy changes have allowed family members to return to Bahrain. Adult family members were authorized to accompany service members to Bahrain in November 2008, and the rules further changed in June 2009 to allow all family members to accompany their sponsor.

Sailors interested in assignments to Bahrain are reminded that the Career Management System/Interactive Detailing window was recently shortened and that their detailing window is now seven to nine months prior to their projected rotation date. After that three-month window, Sailors become eligible for “needs of the Navy” assignments.

For more information, visit the Navy Personnel Command website’s “Enlisted” or “Officer” assignments pages at www.npc.navy.mil/Enlisted or www.npc.navy.mil/Officer/ and look for the “Bahrain Fact Sheet” in the menu on the right side of the page. **AH**

Story courtesy of Naval Personnel Command, Millington, Tenn.

Re-Enlistment Rules Benefit Fleet, Readiness

Two new algorithms were developed for the Perform-to-Serve/Fleet Rating Identification Engine (PTS/Fleet RIDE) system and recently activated, to better identify top-performing Sailors.

The new algorithms benefit Sailors by including factors that distinguish them from their peers.

“These algorithms were built from fleet input,” said Joe Kelly, PTS program manager. “One is specifically for in-rate applications, and the other is for rating-conversion requests. Both algorithms were created with specific factors that better align the application with the Sailor’s desires.”

The algorithm ranks Sailors using the following performance indicators in order of priority:

- **Highest Pay Grade** – Senior pay grades will rank highest in the system.
- **Selected-Not Yet Advanced** – Froked Sailors rank higher than those not yet picked for advancement.
- **Average Ranking of Five Most Recent Evaluations** – Early Promote, Must Promote and Promotable have numeric values of 5, 4 and 3, respectively. This is used instead of calculating trait averages.
- **Critical Navy Enlisted Classification (NEC)** – Critical NECs rank higher than non-critical NECs. (The conversion algorithm substitutes Fleet RIDE scores for critical NECs).
- **Fleet RIDE/Rank Score** – Provides an indicator of potential success in the rating requested; largely based on a Sailor’s ASVAB score. (This applies to a conversion algorithm only).
- **Physical Fitness Assessment (PFA) Results** – PFAs are calculated based on the number of failures within the past four-year period. Only physically ready Sailors can reenlist.
- **Proximity to End-of-Obligated-Service (EAOS)** – Sailors closer to their EAOS rank higher in PTS. This indicator would be the tie-breaker between otherwise equally qualified Sailors.

The new PTS/Fleet RIDE system includes the enlisted community managers (ECM) in the selection process by giving them the ability

to review the algorithm results for content and accuracy. The Head ECM can then review all approved and denied quotas, forwarded from the ECMs, to ensure their list complies with end-strength goals set forth by the chief of naval personnel, resulting in better program oversight and management.

Another improvement in PTS is the shift to year group management, vice zones.

“Year group management is advantageous for several reasons,” said Capt. Hank Roux, head enlisted community manager. “It now compares Sailors with their contemporaries, Sailors who are in the same rating and entered the Navy in the same fiscal year. The pre-October legacy system compared those at extreme ends of each zone against each other.”

For example, a hospital corpsman with four years of service no longer has to compete against a corpsman with six years.

“We are constantly reviewing our processes to develop modifications that will provide the fleet with the best system to evaluate our Sailors for continued service,” said Mike Dawson, enlisted community manager deputy.

For more PTS/Fleet RIDE algorithm information, read NAVADMIN 352/10 or contact the Navy Personnel Command Customer Service Center at 1-866-U-ASK-NPC or via e-mail at CSCMailbox@navy.mil. **AH**

Story by MC1(AW) LaTunya Howard, Navy Personnel Command, Millington, Tenn.

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A group of sailors in camouflage uniforms are in a forest at night. They are holding a large, dark poncho liner over a map. One sailor is kneeling and looking at the map, while others stand around him, holding the poncho liner up. The scene is dimly lit, with a flashlight beam illuminating the map. The background shows tall pine trees and a cloudy sky.

Shifting Colors

Going Green in Gulfport

Story and photos by MC1(AW) R. Jason Brunson

For many people these days, the phrase “going green,” might mean focusing their efforts on the environment. Although saving Mother Earth is important to the Navy, the term has a slightly different meaning for Sailors reporting to Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) for the first time.

GMSA Patrick Bek, a student attending the Expeditionary Combat Skills (ECS) Course, reads a map by flashlight while his shipmates hold a poncho liner overhead to protect the map from rain.



Students listen to a safety brief before they head out to complete the field portion of their land navigation training while attending the ECS course.

To these Sailors, going green is a mindset shift from the typical “blue water” Navy way of thinking to more of a ground combat mindset. This process begins at Expeditionary Combat Skills (ECS) course aboard Naval Construction Battalion Center Gulfport, Miss.

The ECS course is the foundation of the NECC training continuum, providing a standardization of training in common core, basic individual combat skills, knowledge and abilities. Sailors learn to shoot, move, communicate and survive – to succeed in the expeditionary environment as well as seamlessly and effectively integrate into the military’s joint force initiative.

ECS is a four-week course of instruction developed by NECC in collaboration with the Center for Security Forces (CSF) which currently teaches the course.

According to the CSF Assistant Site Director Billy Sloan, the program was born from the need to provide all NECC personnel the same basic skill set.

When NECC stood up as a command in January 2006, each subordinate command had different training programs. Yet, NECC’s various units are often co-located in the Areas of Responsibility in which they operate.

“When you look at the different units within NECC,” Sloan said, “we have Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD), Seabees, Riverines ... they all have different tactics, techniques and procedures, or TTPs, in practice at the unit level.

“We don’t teach those here,” Sloan explained. “We focus on the individual’s basic skill set, their basic needs to go into the field and take care of themselves, fight for themselves and give them a foundation to build on.”

Sloan said the course provides Sailors with an understanding of basic skills such as how to treat themselves if wounded, how to transition between their primary and secondary

weapons and how to recognize improvised explosive devices (IEDs). But, according to Sloan, the primary focus is to teach students how to use their mind and determine the most appropriate combat-related decision.

“What we really focus on here is taking a junior [or less experienced] Sailor and teaching them land warfare. Many of them may be placed in a situation such as an entry control point where they are making that primary decision whether to engage the enemy or let them pass on,” Sloan said. “Too often as leaders, we don’t understand that we are putting our most junior troops in that position.”

To Sloan, that inexperience is one of the most challenging elements they face in their efforts to instill the combat mindset.

“The students arrive here with boot camp under their belt and maybe “A” school. They are not accustomed to wearing individual combat equipment. Many of them are first-time weapons handlers,” Sloan said.

Equipment Operator Constructionman Recruit Mark Teri Bascon said he’d never experienced anything like the training before becoming an ECS student.

“I was excited to learn new things, so I volunteered to do everything,” Bascon said. “I came here with only the slightest idea of how to provide first aid. Now that I’ve been through this training I can tell that it’s really hard, but I know that I could do it if I had to. I know that I’m capable of pulling someone to a position of cover and applying a tourniquet and shooting back at the enemy, if necessary.”

Sloan said his personal opinion is that ECS is one of the most important courses Sailors can attend if they are transitioning to an expeditionary community.

For Sailors coming from ships and who have never served in land warfare, Sloan noted, “ECS can be a pretty eye-opening experience.

“When I first joined the land warfare community you were given a weapon for familiarization and then you went on to your unit,” Sloan said.

Now, he said, ECS provides students with hands-on training, and skills-based knowledge taught by instructors who have a minimum of two years of documented experience in their area of expertise.

ECS Instructor Curtis Parsons spent 25 years in the Army. For most of that time, he was a Green Beret. He was also an Airborne Ranger who spent 16 years overseas. He served with the Colombian army for a year going after Pablo Escobar, a drug lord, operating in Panama and El Salvador. During his last 10 years on active duty, Parsons was part of a counter-terrorism unit.

Parsons is now one of approximately 50 privately contracted ECS instructors who come from many varied backgrounds of military service as well as different levels of experience with state, local and federal law enforcement agencies.

The course curriculum is rigid and challenging, and includes both classroom and field instruction. In the first week students learn land navigation, terrain recognition, map reading, how to use a compass and plot an azimuth. First they learn in a classroom setting, then it’s out to the field range where they must successfully navigate in both daytime and at night. In the second half of the first week they receive field medical training.

The following week they head out to the range to train with the M-9 service pistol. They learn the basics and work their way up to shooting a moving target while drawing from the holster.

Students, GMSN Steven Boram and EN3 Michael Hovis, learn land navigation using a few basic land navigation tools during the classroom portion of their land navigation training while attending the ECS Course.

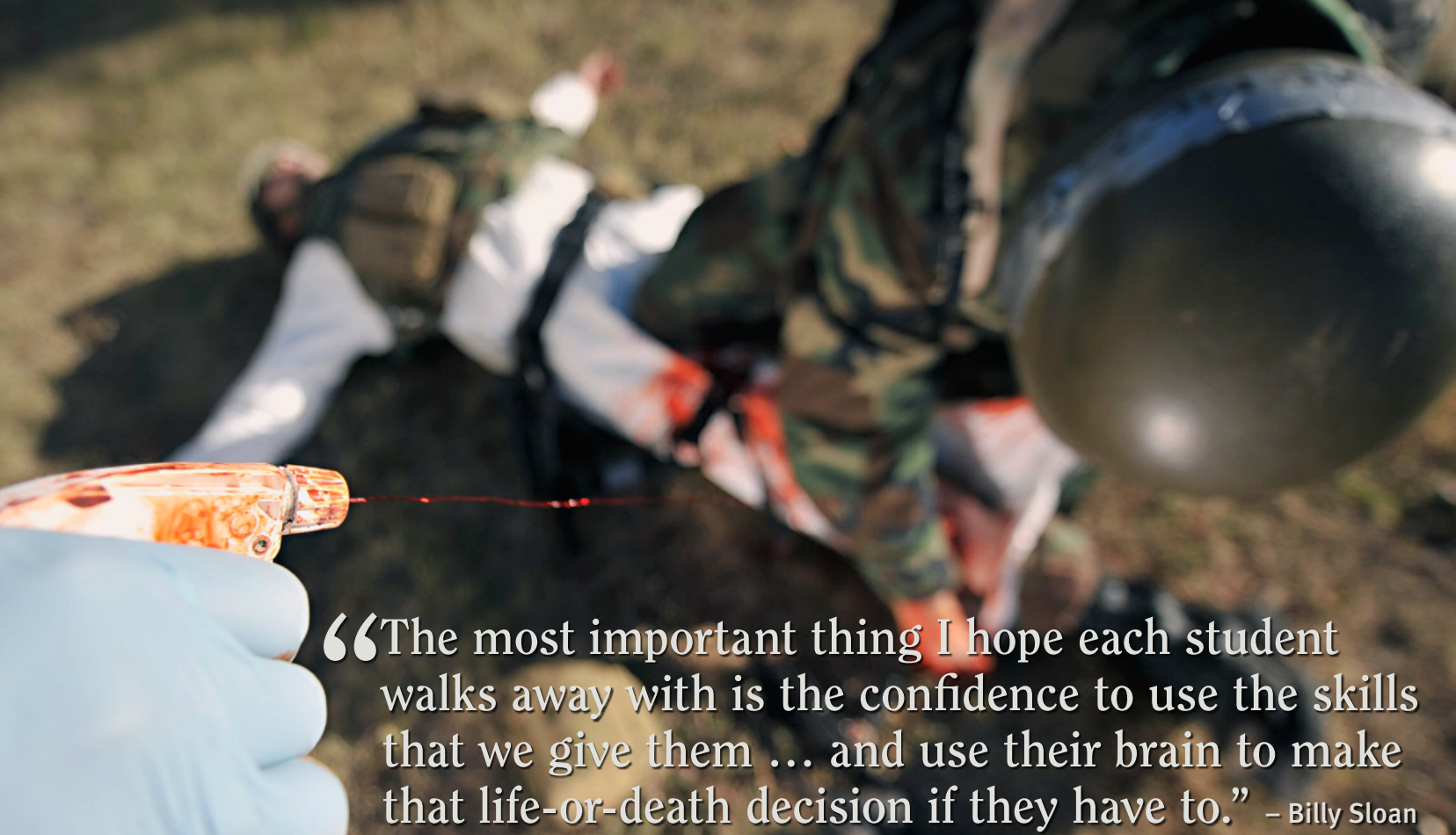




“I was surprised, but I was able to qualify as a sharpshooter on both the pistol and the rifle. They told me for a beginner I’m doing really well. And now from this final scenario I feel like I will be able to deploy and come home safely.”

— EOCR Mark Teri Bascon





“The most important thing I hope each student walks away with is the confidence to use the skills that we give them ... and use their brain to make that life-or-death decision if they have to.” – Billy Sloan

As part of a field medical test, instructors squirt a fake blood solution onto a victim’s simulated wounds. Students must properly apply tourniquets and battle dressings to stop the bleeding.

During the third week, they start with the M-4 service rifle and work their way up to using the M-4 and the M-9 together transitioning between them, shooting and moving from behind cover, as well as shooting at multiple distances. They also shoot at night and conduct final qualifications.

In addition to weapons training, students learn about basic convoy operations, chemical, biological and radiological warfare training; and receive a course of instruction on recognition of IEDs.

“Throughout the training,” said Parsons, “the instructors stress the importance of weapons handling skills. If students are not transitioning properly or handling weapons properly instructors are quick to correct them.”

According to Parsons, the first three-and-a-half weeks of training prepares students for the final two exercises - the first of which is Judgment-based Engagement Training (JET).

JET scenarios take place in a state-of-the-art Fire Arms Training Simulator (FATS), which puts students in a combat environment and forces them to make decisions while also course correcting for mistakes and equipment failures.

According to Parsons, JET training is where the light bulb usually comes on for a lot of the students. They start to see how learning the mechanics of shooting and moving are only part of the equation. They start to see how a quick and accurate assessment of a threat, and being prepared to respond under pressure are vital to mission success.

“The combat mindset is the hardest part to teach. It is just something you can’t really teach in a week,” Parsons said. “We start trying to get it through to them in the first week, but it often doesn’t really sink in until right before graduation. This stuff is more real than a video game.”

Before going into the FATS, students have a class on combat mindset. The class covers various levels of alertness and the significance of security posture.

The class also covers the physiological changes the body goes through when under stress, such as tunnel vision, auditory exclusion and the loss of fine motor skills. Parsons said they teach students techniques to help them recognize, mitigate or overcome these problems.

The students get all their combat gear on - helmet, body armor and holsters - prior to entering the FATS. They assemble as a platoon in chairs, which are set up in a semi-circle with the simulator in the middle on one end and a projection screen on the other. Pairs of students then get up in front of the group and run through various scenarios.

Bascon explained the JET scenario as a learning experience. “I was standing watch at an entry control point,” he said, “when a lady, who appeared kind of suspicious, approached. I thought she might be hiding something underneath her clothing. I must have developed tunnel vision because, apparently I missed some other clues while focusing on her. When she suddenly revealed the bomb she was wearing - I froze.

“I couldn’t find the safety on the rifle,” Bascon continued. “All I could do was yell, ‘threat, threat, threat.’ It was only a couple of seconds but, if it were a real-life situation, by the time I managed to click the safety off on my weapon she could have easily killed me and the other watchstanders.”

Bascon said that knowing he could have done better in that situation, really made him stop and think.

“My first instinct told me there was something wrong. If I had followed that instinct and put my rifle in the ready position it would not have ended that way,” Bascon said. “A lot of the things that we went through here are like that. We may have failed one time but in the future we can say, ‘OK that’s not going to happen again.’”

While the students are focused on the scenario, the instructors are focused on them. “We watch all of their actions, their facial expressions and how they are carry themselves,” Parsons said. “The simulator has M-4s that fire, have recoil and make sound. We can also induce malfunctions on them. If they do not go through the proper malfunction procedures the machine will recognize it and not allow them to continue firing.

“Many of the scenarios don’t have a right or wrong answer, and are based on the student’s judgment,” Parsons said. “After the scenarios, the instructor’s go over the students’ judgments and discuss their actions and thought processes based on the threat assessments and rights to defend themselves.”

The final exercise is a series of hand-to-hand combat scenarios. Students encounter opposition forces in typical situations and are forced to put all of their training and lessons learned to work under fire.

They use “simunition” (SIMS) rounds, that are hard, plastic-tipped rounds filled with a waxy pink dye, for both weapons. The SIMS rounds leave a stinging pink reminder of the student’s mistakes as well as their successes.

Initially, Bascon said he was really not very confident with the weapons. But, after the weapons range time he had received throughout the course, he felt much more prepared to use the SIMS round.

“I could see my rounds hitting the person. I know that if that were a real situation I could have taken out the threat with a few shots,” he said.

Bascon added the exercises really drove home the importance of maintaining the combat mindset, and to him that means always being aware of the worst-case scenario and being prepared to deal with it.

“The best part of my job is when somebody finally ‘gets it.’” said Parsons. “When they come up at the end and say ‘I didn’t think I was going to get anything out of this, but I really saw something in myself, and hopefully, I’ll be ready.’”

Sloan expressed similar sentiments. “[The students] can say, ‘I know how to handle my weapon. I understand what my mission is and I understand that the goal is to go in and survive and return home to my loved ones,’” Sloan noted. “So, personally, I think we give them the best shot that we have ever given anyone in the U.S. Navy – [the ability to join] their unit with confidence.” **AH**

Brunson was assigned Defense Media Activity, Washington, D.C., and has transferred to Expeditionary Combat Camera, Norfolk.

EACN Gabriel Jimenez provides simulated emergency medical care to MA2 Weylin Morton as part of a training scenario.





Other The Fleet's Basketball Team

Story by MC2(SCW) Brian Coverley
Photos by MC1 Joseph Garza and MC2(SCW) Brian Coverley

For more than a century, one game continues captivating Americans, spurring thoughts of athletic greatness throughout the driveways, inner-city courts and gymnasiums of the United States. Heroes rise through their prowess with what seems to the untrained eye, a simple athletic endeavor.

Most of the players on the All-Navy men's and women's basketball teams have previous playing experience and the team gives them a chance to continue their playing experience.



All-Navy women's basketball team assistant coach Diane Richardson reacts to a successful scoring attempt by her team during the women's last scrimmage.

They have become household names, icons of popular culture – George Gervin, Larry Bird, Michael Jordan and more recently LeBron James. They are sports celebrities documented through photograph and video. Their spectacular feats captured and relived, watched and re-watched, talked of and attempted.

But even the legends – Charles Barkley, Hakeem Olajuwon, Isiah Thomas – began their quest for basketball greatness somewhere, playing on worn concrete or a packed-dirt lot, shooting a ball with barely any firmness and traction left through a hoop with no net.

A journey much like the active-duty Sailors who are members of the U.S. Navy Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR)-sponsored All-Navy basketball team, have undergone a journey fueled and driven by their pride in the uniform they wear and an unparalleled love of the game...

While thoughts of All-Navy basketball can spur images of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I Midshipmen, the Naval Academy team in Annapolis, Md., that couldn't be further from the truth.

All-Navy basketball team is built from the operational Navy, comprised of deck-plate

Sailors play basketball in the hangar bay of USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) while transiting the Gulf of Oman.

Sailors from military installations all over the world wishing to showcase their love of the game and their pride in Navy.

Potential 2010 All-Navy Basketball Team members, both male and female, endure a rigorous tryout schedule at Halsey Field House at the U.S. Naval Academy (USNA) through much of July, with days beginning at 7:30 a.m. and finishing at 10 p.m. By mid-morning, potential team members' uniforms are drenched in sweat, but by the estimation of the team's coach, Lt. Samuel Caldwell, these players' days had just begun.

"Really, this is a lot harder than their normal workday," he said, adding that these Sailors, all under temporary assigned duty (TAD) orders and trying for a place on the team, were doing something few get the opportunity to attempt. "We got a Sailor who came all the way out here from Italy. We got a couple other guys who came off the USS *Abraham Lincoln*, and we also have commissioned officers who graduated and played at the Naval Academy."

Caldwell also said the level at which these Sailors are performing is a testament to their skill and hard work.

"When you look at it, it's a small number of people," he said. "What people don't realize is that with All-Navy basketball, you're talking about 24 Sailors in the *entire* Navy getting to come here. And then, after the cut, you're talking about 12. That final 12 – only 12 Sailors from the Navy can be on this team."

Caldwell also said Coast Guardsmen are invited to All-Navy team tryouts, because there is no Coast Guard team.

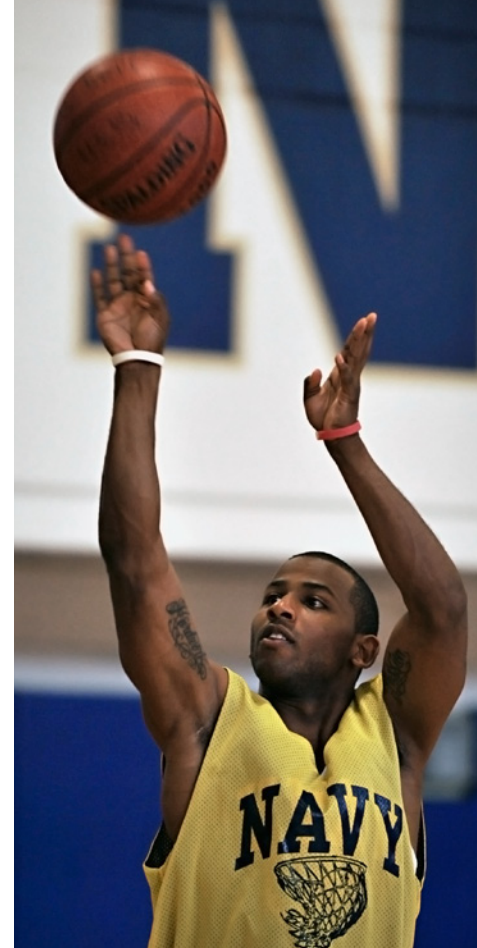
All-Navy basketball team members closed their try-outs with a scrimmage that proved a determining factor for the team's final roster. The highly competitive scrimmage proved an accurate assessment of potential team member's abilities, something Caldwell said was a definitive starting point in constructing the team.

"You definitely have to be athletic, but at the same time you have to have a high basketball IQ," he said. "Since we don't have the luxury of a whole basketball season, there are certain things you need to know when you come to camp, like understanding backside help, understanding pick and roll and things like that. If you don't know these fundamental things, it will be very hard to play together as a cohesive unit. Having that high basketball IQ can make up the difference when we haven't been playing together for years."

Caldwell, who normally works with the office of the Chief of Naval Operations Intelligence Plot (CNO-IP), also said that along with the fitness, athletic ability and basketball IQ required from his players, there's something else for which he looks, something critical to making and being part of a team.

"You have to be coachable," he said. "You also have to be willing to take a different role than what you would normally. The Sailors here, wherever they've been, they probably were the best one on their team. You have to make an attitude adjustment and be willing to play a role that maybe you're not used to playing."

Since 1968, All-Navy Sports – which oversees and manages the All-Navy Basketball Program – has provided service members from All-Navy communities and ranks the opportunity to show their skills and talents and represent their command in a series of national and sometimes global competitions, according to James Senn, the Commander Naval Installations Command (CNIC) All-Navy Sports program director.



Above— During the final days of practice before making cuts for the All-Navy men's and women's basketball teams, Lt. Samuel Caldwell, assistant coaches Dionne Lamb, Nikki Lewis, Diane Richardson and HM1 Deontanellie Wheeler, mentor potential players as they run through drills.



Women's All-Navy basketball team member, AW3 Arned Jackson, assigned on Okinawa, Japan, drives the ball to the basket for two points during a game against the U.S Marine Corps team.



Photo by MC1 John Collins

"Basketball is a grassroots-level sport," he said. "It's played on most installations that have intramural sports. Those are the types of sports we look to at the 'All-Navy' level because we're going to be competing against the Air Force, the Marine Corps and the Army."

Senn also said that initially, All-Navy Sports only funded and managed boxing, wrestling, and track-and-field, and that expanding the program to encompass additional activities included upping the caliber of competition.

"This has gone from having regional competitions possibly as the only event for these guys and gals – these Sailors – to participate in, to an inter-service championship, which involves the other three services," he said. "It's gone one step further. It's come from meager beginnings to service members competing against Olympian [level] players from other countries."

Senn said All-Navy Sports has incorporated with the Conseil International du Sport Militaire (CISM) games, an international competition pitting a U.S. team comprised of service members from all branches against military competitors from other countries.

Although Sailors selected for participation in the final stage of the All-Navy Basketball tryouts might not have had competition in the CISM games in mind, they cherished being there and without a doubt pushed themselves in their training and scrimmage.

The July 30 evening scrimmages inside USNA's Halsey Field House showed that drive, that 'Love of the Game' the coaches scoped hard to see. Sailors and Coastguardsmen gave their all. They held nothing back as they played in teams against each other, knowing that this was their make-or-break moment. Only half of them would continue. The following morning the coaches announced their verdict.

Navy Recruiting District Atlanta six-year All-Navy Basketball veteran Yeoman 2nd Class Jason Jefferson made this year's cut, and said the team which was forged through minicamps, regional try outs and the final scrimmage at Halsey Field House is top-notch.

"I feel good," he said. "We put in great competition to make one of the best teams we've ever had."

Women's All-Navy Basketball Team three-year veteran U.S. Coastguard Yeoman 3rd Class Syreeta Bromfield from U.S. Coast Guard Station Cape May, N.J., said the women's All-Navy Basketball Team boasts a higher skill level than in her previous experience.

"We have a more balanced team and as far as knowledge of basketball, it's better this year," she said. "This is my third year. We won two gold medals, so we're gonna try for a third."

First year All-Navy Basketball player Master-At-Arms 3rd Class Myrna Tangar, TAD from Strategic Weapons Facility Pacific (SWFPAC) in Bangor, Wash., said while individual talent on the women's team is evident, channeling those skills into a team is something on which she is focusing.

"I think we have a lot of powerful tools. We just have to figure out how to use them the right way," she said. "To figure out everyone's

strengths and weaknesses and just focus, honing in on what we have as a team, and then use that to defeat everyone."

While MWR's All-Navy Sports continues and evolves its more-than 40-year legacy, many Sailors throughout the fleet are still not aware of the All-Navy Sports programs that they can join and what they offer, such as All-Navy Volleyball, Boxing, Wrestling, Golf, Swimming and other sports programs.

According to Caldwell, participation in these programs is something a Sailor must seek and commands should support.

"If you can let a Sailor come to All-Navy Basketball, to me this is one of the biggest retention tools," he said. "If you gave them the opportunity, even if they didn't make it, they can say 'At least I got the chance to try.' We can't be dream-killers. We've got to nurture and mentor these Sailors. And if you give them the opportunities, I'll bet that anyone of these Sailors that went back to their commands, they'll work overtime. They're going to do whatever you ask them to do, and they're going to do it ten times better."

Second-year All-Navy Basketball Team player Electronics Technician 3rd Class Natassja Mitchell from Naval Air Station North Island's metric and calibration lab said the opportunity to participate with the team has provided the opportunity to grow, both personally and professionally.

"I always wanted to make my mark in the Navy and use my talents," she said. "It's great way to meet a lot of new people, as well as learn a lot of things that I didn't learn before. It's making me a better person, a better Sailor."

Naval Academy instructor Lt. Kwame Ofori, who had played with the team in 2007 and made the cut this year, said participation on the All-Navy Basketball Team can have a positive leadership and teamwork impact regardless of pay grade.

"As a leader and officer, I've come to understand the need for mentorship, to try to make myself relevant to the new generations, try to really understand what they're going through and help them grow as leaders," he said. "That's the main reason I look forward to this opportunity. Plus you have the team environment – usually people that play sports understand team as well. That it's a synergy – everybody's looking out for one another, communicating. It makes the mission all the more attainable."

While a basketball future beyond the 2010 All-Navy Basketball season remains uncertain for the 12 male and female Sailors accepted on the team's final roster, their journey, which

could have started on any playground in any state in the country is for now incomplete. And much like their Navy journey, an uncertainty of duty stations and ships, there is a parallel which can be drawn, a sense of devotion to duty and a love of the game. **AH**

Coverley and Garza are assigned to Defense Media Activity, Washington, D.C.

All-Navy guard AZ1 Brandon Newman, from Fleet Readiness Center Mid-Atlantic Site, New Orleans, flies over an Army defender for a two-point shot during a basketball game against the Army.



Photo by MC1 John Collins



AMERICA'S NAVY

A 21ST CENTURY LEADER

Where there was once only a stretch of open sand

on Anzio Beach at Joint Expeditionary Base Little

Creek-Fort Story (JEBLCFS), Va., there is a 720-foot

elevated causeway system-modular, or ELCAS(M).

Story by MC2 Ron Kuzlik
Photos by MC2 Meranda Keller



Lt. Jeffrey Rozema conducts a safety brief following a man overboard drill. Using a dummy thrown from the pier head, all work is halted as a three-man boat crew is called to the scene to perform a rapid rescue.

Able to be built to lengths of 3,000 feet, ELCAS(M) overcomes the gap between cargo-carrying vessels and an ashore landing area for major cargo movements where there is either no existing pier or where an existing facility has become damaged or unusable.

ELCAS(M) is a unique capability in support of the Navy's Sea Basing strategy. Sea Basing facilitates enhanced operational flexibility and the establishment of maximum combat power ashore with minimum force protection requirements and an increased command and control capability from the sea. Sea Basing's advantage lies in the ability to move traditional land-based logistic functions to the sea. It affords the arrival, assembly, supply, sustainment and reconstitution from a port or airfield to units at sea.

During 2010, approximately 200 Reserve and active component Seabees from Amphibious Construction Battalion (ACB) 1, from Coronado, Calif., and ACB-2, from JEBLCFS, worked nearly 60,000 hours in 12-hour shifts for 13 days straight to assemble the \$60 million system.

"The ability of our Sailors to deliver and assemble a massive, portable, improvised pier emphasizes my belief that Sea Basing is a capability that the Navy brings to the operation, whether combat-related or for humanitarian assistance," said Adm. John C. Harvey, Jr., commander of U.S. Fleet Forces Command. "It is a capability that we have here and now,"

"No one does it better than our Sailors and Marines," Harvey added. "The capability truly is a key element of what makes our Navy an effective global force."

In the early days of Operation Iraqi Freedom a 1,400-foot ELCAS(M) was constructed at Camp Patriot, Kuwait, in 2003. It was billed as one of the largest amphibious operations in the history of the United States. The causeway was used for the massive offload, and subsequent backload, of thousands of Marines and tons of ammunition and fighting equipment meant for all branches of the Armed Forces in Iraq.

According to Harvey, having intermediate staging bases in, or near, the military theater of operations to support troops and provide logistics and combat fire support is a necessary element of 21st century sea power. Sea Basing employs current tactics and capabilities with added benefits, such as enhanced mobility and sustainment and the ability to create an established infrastructure in spite of the unpredictable nature of the littoral environment. These benefits result in a wider range of options for national security decision makers and combatant commanders.

During a visit to the Anzio Beach ELCAS(M) at JEBLCFS, Harvey commented on the capabilities the system brings to logistical operations.

"The ELCAS provides our forces with a unique capability unmatched by any other nation. It is a critical part of our LOTS (Logistics to the Shore) mission and our Sea Basing strategy. ELCAS reconstitutes the arrival, assembly, supply and sustainment at sea and from the sea. It's sea basing at its best," he stated.

For the Sailors involved in the assembly of ELCAS(M), training and teamwork play an important role in bringing this unique Sea Basing capability to the fleet.

"Whenever we construct the ELCAS," said Cmdr. Joseph Grealish, ACB-2's commanding officer, "We make sure we have both the East Coast and West Coast amphibious construction battalions involved, as well as both active-duty and Reserve component Seabees."

"This training involves a great deal of knowledge transfer from the experienced Seabees to the younger 'Bees' involving quality control as well as technical expertise," said Grealish. "We rely on a number of players to make this happen, from underwater construction teams to the Navy Beach Group and Military Sealift Command."

Equipment Operator 2nd Class (SCW) Lisa Burrell, ACB-2 pierhead supervisor, is responsible for assembly of the pier and maintaining communication between the pierhead, the marshalling yard and the pile yard. This was her fourth ELCAS(M) build.

"There are two 200-ton cranes and a 60-ton crane," said Burrell. "The 60-ton crane is a mobile all-terrain crane, ready to go, but the two 200-ton cranes have a 130-foot boom with counterweights that needs to be assembled. It takes an entire 12-hour shift to assemble each crane."

"After we position the cranes, we place the ramp section and start to build the roadway. It's a continuous process," Burrell added. "Each section is 40-feet long by 8-feet wide and about 5-feet high and needs to be brought into place, welded and checked to make sure it's secure. About 100 sections were used to build this ELCAS(M)."

EO3 Anthony Byrd, a crane operator, was responsible for teaching a half dozen new Seabees to operate the 200-ton crane.

"We teach all the basics of learning to operate the crane. You have to gain a feel for the controls. Whether you're swinging the crane, booming it or hoisting the load up and down, you have to be aware of what's going on around you and where everybody is when you're moving the load," Byrd said.



Equipment operators drive equipment on the pier with the driver's side closest to the water to allow them to see where the vehicle is located on the pier and not drive off the edge. With traffic moving on and off the pier, there is no room to turn tractor trailers around on the pier head so it is equipped with two turntables. The turntables function with the use of airbags allowing trucks to drive on and be turned around over the water so they can drive off ELCAS.

Left—
EO2 Justin Jordan (left) and EO3 Anthony Byrd guide pilings into the spudwell which will free fall to the bottom before driven in by the pile-driver.



Capt. Paul Webb (right) commanding officer of Amphibious Construction Battalion 2, explains the logistic and technologic advantages of the Navy Elevated Causeway System-Modular (ELCAS(M)) to Adm. J. C. Harvey Jr., commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command. The ELCAS(M) is an expeditionary pier used to off-load containers beyond the surf zone to shore via an elevated roadway structure.

Photo by MC2 Ron Kuzlik

“It’s the best job an equipment operator can have. Every day is a new challenge with new rewards.”

EOC(SCW) Steven Slusser, ELCAS operations chief, was very impressed about how both units, active and Reserve alike, came together on the project.

“We kept on the timeline, worked with multiple units and formed one team for a successful build. We had ACB-1 and ACB-2, with the reserve Seabees bringing the technical skills that they have from the outside world, and that’s definitely an added asset to the project,” Slusser said.

“I’ve lost count on how many ELCAS builds that I’ve been on, maybe 12 or 15. Every build is different. This one was very smooth, no accidents, no incidents and it was really a lot of fun along the way.”

Lt. Musheerah Little, ELCAS(M) project officer-in-charge, was responsible for the project, and to ensure its safe and on-time completion, while coordinating the work of all the Seabees and producing daily status reports.

“Even though we were working 12-hour shifts, seven days a week, everybody worked well, and had a good attitude. There were many junior people on the build

and we were able to get them trained-up and certified as ELCAS(M) specialists.

“This expeditionary pier system gives us great pride in having the skills and knowledge needed in building and bringing this system online,” said Little.

According to EO1 Jason Daniels, a Reserve Component Seabee from ACB-2, “The system is definitely a value-added asset for real world applications.”

“There’s no better job in the world than being a CEC [Civil Engineer Corps] officer,” added Lt. Phong Pham, ACB-1 Reserve officer-in-charge. “Nowhere in the civilian world can somebody have so much opportunity with so much responsibility. This was an extremely effective and efficient build.

“We had nearly 200 Seabees with a variety of skills and experience levels working to make this project such a success. ELCAS gives us capabilities and access that we have never had before,” Pham said. **AH**

Kuslik is a Reservist assigned to Defense Media Activity, Washington, D.C.

Steelworkers on night shift cut pilings to a maximum length of 76 feet. This length has been predetermined as the 60-ton crane can only lift pieces up to 76 feet.

Sailors Must Take Active Role to Stay Competitive in Today's Navy

Story by Cullen James

With extraordinarily high reenlistments and historically low attrition rates, Navy leaders are counseling that Sailors must now take a more active role in their careers and one of the most important ways is through documented performance.

"Sustained superior performance – it's almost a proverb, but it is true now more than ever," said Master Chief Navy Career Counselor (SW/AW) Kevin Sullivan, U.S. Fleet Forces Command fleet counselor. "[There are] more Sailors wanting to remain on active duty than the Navy has billets.

"Documenting positive performance, whether on a performance evaluation or by specific recognition, will enhance a Sailor's ability to stand out from his or her peer group when requesting rating designation, rating conversion, a Perform to Serve (PTS) quota or calculating an advancement examination final multiple score."

Performance Evaluations

"Every action has a consequence," Sullivan said, "some positive and some negative."

Navy leadership stresses that competitive performance now begins the day you enter the Navy. Performance is one of the areas Sailors have the greatest control over in their career. By focusing on doing their best and improving their skills, Sailors can increase their chances of good evaluations.

"Perform your job as if everything depended on it – for your shipmates, it might; for you, it does," said Sullivan. "Gone are the days when a Sailor can get by with marginally satisfactory performance and expect to make the decision to reenlist three days before their end of active obligated service (EAOS). PTS requires first-term Sailors to make long-term, often life-changing, decisions earlier than ever before while just getting started into their Navy career."

Equally important to high performance is ensuring that all records are accurate.

"The Sailor must realize that they are responsible for the accuracy of their official record," said Jim Price, Performance Evaluation Division director at Navy Personnel Command (NPC). "They must get in the habit of periodically checking



their record and not waiting until just prior to a selection or promotion board."

The following tools are available through BUPERS Online (BOL) at <https://www.bol.navy.mil>:

- **Individual Continuity Report:** With the Performance Evaluation Continuity Report, a Sailor may view the continuity of all performance evaluations submitted on them going back to January 1996. The Performance Evaluation Continuity Report also identifies breaks in continuity, rejected reports and selection board convening dates.
- **Web Enabled Record Review/Official Military Personnel File (OMPF):** Sailors can access their OMPF to view the documents a selection board would review.
- **Order Record on CD:** For Sailors without common access card (CAC) access, they can order their records on CD.
- **Performance Summary Record (PSR):** The PSR summarizes a Sailor's professional and performance history. Selection boards use the PSR with the official digital record. Increasing demands on Sailors to review their personal records doesn't mean that supervisors don't have a crucial role in performance evaluation.

"The supervisor is the link between the Sailor and the rest of the command," said Sullivan. "Perception is not always reality, but if the supervisor perceives that a Sailor is a sub-par performer, the Sailor will have a difficult time convincing the command

otherwise. Supervisors need to be fair and consistent, and show no preference based on anything other than performance."

"Deckplate supervisors need to be well-versed on the PTS business rules. Leaders definitely need to understand the evaluation ranking business," said Master Chief Navy Career Counselor (SW/AW) Laura Paquian, career counselor for Commander, Naval Surface Force. "Is your last 'must promote' really as good as your first one? Are Sailors truly of the same quality? Are we grading them on long-term potential for continued service, or just trying to increase our advancement numbers? Grade the Sailors on what they earn," Paquian noted.

Awards and Qualifications

Navy leadership stresses that Sailors should be recognized for their accomplishments as quickly as possible.

"Recognition in anything other than a timely manner cheapens the act, whether it is a simple, 'Nice job, shipmate,' or an award that counts as points toward an advancement exam. Delivery on time can make the difference between a Sailor knowing that their efforts are appreciated or decided that 'this Navy thing' just isn't for them," said Sullivan. "An award delivered late can adversely affect selection for advancement, with the resulting impact on morale, PTS selection and ultimately retention."

In the same way that Sailors are ultimately responsible for keeping their records up to date, they also much ensure their awards information is accurate. The following sites can assist Sailors in checking and updating awards information:

- To ensure awards data is complete, visit the Navy Department Awards Web-Service at <https://awards.navy.mil>.
- To reconcile and update awards, visit the NPC Awards Web Page at www.npc.navy.mil/CareerInfo/RecordsManagement/AwdDecorMedal.htm.

"Education, empowerment and timely recognition is key," said Paquian. "Simple acknowledgement of hard work and effort goes a long way."

Career History

A Sailor's career history should demonstrate their job scope, leadership and a trend of increased responsibility and performance. Sailors should begin looking toward the future as soon as they sign in.

"A promotion recommendation of 'Progressing' or 'Significant Problems' mid-way through an initial four-year hitch may eliminate any change of receiving a PTS quota for reenlistment," said Sullivan. "With the PTS window opening 12 months prior to EAOS and the two previous regular periodic evaluations being used to determine a Sailor's PTS eligibility, a 'Progressing' evaluation one-and-a-half years into a first hitch may still be with the Sailor at the time of PTS application."

Focusing on career advancement is essential to building a good career history. But, maintaining a clean record is another vital element in today's Navy.

"From the E-1 to the O-10, we are being held accountable for our actions," said Chief Navy Career Counselor Jayne Epaloose, immediate superior-in-command career counselor, San Diego.

"One non-judicial punishment (NJP), no matter how minor the infraction, can end a Sailor's career before it starts. Get a mentor that will be brutally honest with you. Your mentor is there to make you a better Sailor, not coddle you."

Education, Training and Looking to the Future

In line with the push to ensure all records are correct, the Navy asks its Sailors to verify the information in their Electronic Service Jacket and to take advantage of education services and courses such as those available through Navy Knowledge Online (www.nko.navy.mil).

Assisting Sailors with long-term goals and helping them progress and realize their full potential is a job of supervisors and command career counselors, according to Sullivan.

"Our responsibility is to ensure that every Sailor is 'brought to the table,'" Sullivan said. "This means providing proper sponsorship to get the new Sailor off on the right foot, conducting a thorough command indoctrination to establish expectations, performing career development boards (CDB) on schedule to ensure our Sailors have the latest career information and are moving in the right direction, entering our Sailors into PTS on time to ensure that they receive maximum 'looks' and conducting proper pre-separation counseling for any Sailor electing to separate or being directed to do so."

CDBs are a way to let Sailors know how they are doing, where they can improve and what leadership expects from them. They're also a place for supervisors and Sailors to map out long-term objectives.

"CDBs are more critical now than they've ever been in the past," wrote Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (SS/SW) Rick D. West in a recent edition of his "Bottom Line: Up Front" newsletter (available at www.navy.mil/mcpn). "It is our responsibility as leaders to ensure we are conducting CDBs and providing our Sailors with all available information and options in order to keep them on a successful naval career path. It is also the responsibility of our Sailors to ensure they've weighed all their options when making their career decisions."

"It is imperative as leaders that command teams are staying fully engaged in our Sailors' futures," West wrote. "Be proactive in performing CDBs and submitting PTS applications on time to ensure we are giving our Sailors the opportunity for in-rate approval or approval to another rating to fully support our Navy's mission."

For more information about performance, visit the NPC website at www.npc.navy.mil. **AH**

James is assigned to Navy Personnel Command, Millington, Tenn.

Links to Success

BUPERS Online (BOL) <https://www.bol.navy.mil>:

Navy Department Awards Web-Service <https://awards.navy.mil>.

NPC Awards Web Page www.npc.navy.mil/CareerInfo/RecordsManagement/AwdDecorMedal.htm.

MCPON(SS/SW) Rick D. West's "Bottom Line: Up Front" newsletter www.navy.mil/mcpn

26.2



Keeping the Pace

Marathoners Back One Another in Culture of Fitness

One had completed eight marathons, and one had never entered a race.

Most trained a lot, while a few trained infrequently or in odd ways.

But when a dozen runners from the Office of the Chief of Naval Personnel (CNP), including Vice Adm. Mark Ferguson himself, crossed the starting line of the 35th Marine Corps Marathon, in Arlington, Va., they had certain things in common.

Officer or enlisted, active-duty, Reserve or civilian, each was an example of the Navy's culture of fitness, and each got support from his shipmates in the months leading up to the race.

"That was one of the neat things about this experience," said Capt. Earl Carter, who served as Ferguson's executive assistant until recently and had never raced before, at any distance. "We had people who would see each other on a daily basis and could offer some level of accountability and encouragement."

According to Carter, that was important during the summer, when the only way to accumulate miles was to run at 5 a.m., because of the heat in the Washington, D.C., area.

"We'd come in and compare times, and talk about what we were doing for fuel and what drinks worked for hydration," Carter said. In addition, the runners talked about "what hurt ... and how to work through the pain."

Yeoman 1st Class Eric Ratcliff, Lt. j.g. Keven Haggerty, Cmdr. Rob Sorensen and Carter were among the N-1 staff members preparing for their first marathons.

Ratcliff had planned to run the 2009 Marine Corps Marathon but backed out when he realized he hadn't trained properly, he said.

"I didn't want another year to go by without achieving that goal," he said.

Ratcliff made sure he was ready for the 2010 marathon by starting his training in April and running six or seven miles at least twice during the week, then adding a run of 10 miles or more every weekend. He also tried to improve his eating habits by avoiding fast food.

Haggerty, the command fitness leader for the N-1 Reserve unit, read up on marathons and nutrition and followed a plan that also called for long runs on weekends. His longest, 20 miles, came in early October.

Sorensen, who said he typically runs five to 10 miles every other day, started adding miles after deciding to run in the marathon and reached 22 miles two weeks before the race.

It was great to see so many CNP staff members enter the race, he said.

"It shows that it's not a matter of getting a great finishing time, but rather it's about stepping up to the challenge of not only running the race itself, but also putting in the miles and hours of training," Sorensen said. "To me, the preparation and training is where it really counts and can make a difference in your overall fitness."

YNC Tony Franklin, Lt. Kirk Nichols, Navy Civilian Jim Reed and Ferguson each ran one Marine Corps Marathon before this one.

Franklin said he never intended to run another, but changed his mind when a colleague couldn't use her spot.

"Honestly, I truly did not train," he said. But the 2009 marathon, several half-marathons and 10-milers and "tons" of 5K and 10K races gave him useful experience.

Nichols ran last year to prove he could run 26.2 miles, he said. Now, he hopes to qualify for the Boston Marathon by completing a race in 3 hours and 20 minutes or less.

Reed, who retired from the Navy, has an old Navy friend who survived skin cancer and formed a group, Team Miles for Melanoma, that trains and races together to raise money – more than \$250,000 in the past two years – to help find a cure.

"It's a win-win," Reed said. The runners help others while staying in shape.

Ferguson ran his first marathon at age 50, after surviving a bout with cancer.

"Running a marathon was like climbing my personal Mount Everest. It was my opportunity to redouble my dedication to my health. Whether it's running marathons, a 5K or simply taking a walk with your spouse, I want every Sailor to make their health a priority," said Ferguson. "Health and fitness must be a life-long choice and needs to include goals you continue to push and expand. Once you find an activity you like, start small and set strong but attainable goals. For me, it's running and training for next year's Boston Marathon."

As Ferguson's assistant, Carter was in and out of his office, where he saw mementos such as the medal CNP got for finishing the 2007 race.

"It was inspiring, and I thought, 'I ought to be able to do this, too,'" he said.

Cmdr. Jim Wais ran five marathons from 1994 to 2001 but didn't run another until 2009, after what he described as the worst year of his life.

"I decided I needed to change my attitude and get on with life, making the most of and enjoying every day," he said. "As a result, 2009 and 2010 have been the best years of my life."

In the past two years, Wais has run five half-marathons and three full marathons, including the Marine Corps Marathon. To get ready, he played lacrosse and took trapeze lessons. He ran a 10-miler in August, a half-marathon in September and a full marathon in early October.

"I was prepared, but I wouldn't recommend this route to anybody with any sense of sanity," he said.

The 2010 Marine Corps Marathon started near the Iwo Jima Memorial in Arlington and climbed uphill for three miles before doubling back along Spout Run and down to Washington.

Lt. Kari Szewczyk, Ferguson's flag aide, led a contingent of CNP staffers who cheered for their colleagues at Spout Run and later at the finish line, which also was near the memorial. They all wore T-shirts that Szewczyk had made, and one staffer, Monica Trucco, blew a vuvuzela, a horn made popular at the World Cup.

Their efforts were appreciated.

"That certainly gave a lift to me when I had finished a long, uphill stretch and was looking at another 23 miles," Carter said.

Among CNP staffers, Sorensen ran fastest at blistering, 3 hour and 38 minute pace. Everyone finished, although Franklin kept his time confidential.

"I honestly don't run races for time," he said. "It was very, very enjoyable, and I truly had a good time."

Reflecting on the high level of participation from his staff, Ferguson's pride was evident when he said, "No matter what their level of experience, reasons for running or their final results, I am proud of each of them for their dedication. They exemplified the Navy's culture of fitness." **AH**

Story courtesy of CNP staff.



EOD1 Jay Smith, assigned to Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit (EODMU) 2, Company 2-2, discusses components of the mini Remote Ordnance Neutralization System robot with soldiers assigned to the 5th Iraqi Army Bomb Disposal Company at Forward Operating Base Warhorse in Diyala Province, Iraq.

Navy EOD Group To Assume Key Iraq Mission

Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group (EODGRU) 1 recently departed Naval Air Station North Island, Calif., to assume duties as the first Navy EOD brigade to command Joint Task Force (JTF) Troy in Iraq.

Approximately 25 Sailors deployed for Baghdad to form the core staff of JTF Troy which is responsible for exercising command and control of operational EOD forces throughout Iraq.

As JTF Troy, EODGRU-1 will command specialized joint counter-improvised explosive device (IED) and Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear forces, and conduct weapons technical intelligence collection and exploitation to assist Iraq in defeating IED networks.

Capt. Edward Eidson, commander, EODGRU-1 said this mission is critical to the safety and security of the people in Iraq and long-term stability for the country and the region.

“It’s the job of the joint task force to protect coalition forces and assist Iraq’s counter IED forces in maintaining the conditions that allowed a sovereign, stable and self-reliant Iraq,” said Eidson. “We are here to advise, train and

assist Iraq forces in the conduct of counter-IED operations.”

“The Iraqi security and military forces have demonstrated robust EOD capabilities. We will assist them in honing their skills while we continue to provide force protection for coalition forces,” said Eidson.

EODGRU-1 has been training and qualifying to assume this mission during 2010.

“From completing the Major Combat Operation certification in April to the pre-deployment sight survey in October, EODGRU-1 has achieved major milestones throughout the certification process,” said Lt. Cmdr. Joseph Haywood, operations officer for JTF Troy.

“The training and preparation doesn’t stop,” said Haywood. “EOD Group 1 will integrate with coalition forces to support the JTF Troy mission and finalize transition of the mission to Iraqi forces.”

Because the President of the United States directed that U.S. troops will leave Iraq by Dec. 31, 2011, Eidson said that EODGRU-1 is ready to ensure that the Iraq Security Force has the skills and training required to protect and defend their country.

“The Iraqi security and military forces are ready and are assuming responsibility for internal security,” said Eidson, “We are here to build on the work already accomplished by

those that came before us, who helped create the conditions for a sovereign, stable and secure Iraq. We will help the Iraqi security and military forces ensure they have the right skills to protect Iraq in the counter-IED fight for years to come.” **AH**

Story by Commander, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group 1 San Diego.

U.S., Peruvian Sailors Dedicate Classroom at Elias Aguirre Romero School

The mission commander for *Southern Partnership Station* (SPS) 2011 recently joined Peruvian navy engineers at Elias Aguirre Romero School in Ventanilla, Peru, to cut a ceremonial ribbon and dedicate a 512 square-foot classroom that was jointly built by American and Peruvian Sailors.

The project, completed by Seabees attached to SPS 2011 from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 28, the 2nd Marines Logistics Group and Peruvian Sailors, also included building an outdoor gym set for the school.

“Seeing the look on the children’s faces as they played on the gym set, and the excitement as they celebrated with us today was the highlight of our stop in Peru,” said SPS 2011 Mission Commander Cmdr. Mark Becker. “We have built not just a building and a gym set, but an enduring friendship with this community today.”

The 19-man Reserve NMCB 28 team joined five U.S. Marine engineers to work with Peruvian Sailors in performing every aspect of the developmental process for the 16-by-32 foot structure, which will be used as a classroom for four year olds. The project was built using locally purchased supplies to ensure the building would be easy to maintain by the school.

Builder 2nd Class Andras Toth, with NMCB 28, was all smiles as he saw the children playing on the gym set he helped build.

“I kept telling one kid ‘no’ as we were building it,” said Toth. “But he was the first one to ride it when it was done.”

“This is a playground that all the children can use,” said the U.S. Military Assistance and Advisement Group Commander for Peru, Army Col. Dan Gettings. “They will remember this for the rest of their lives. They’ll remember that we built this together with the Peru navy, and that we built it as friends.”

SPS 2011 is an annual deployment of U.S. ships to the U.S. Southern Command Area of Responsibility (AOR) in the Caribbean and



Cmdr. Mark Becker, mission commander of *Southern Partnership Station* 2011, right, and Peruvian navy Capitan de Corbeta David Bernard Carrillo participate in a ribbon cutting ceremony at Elias Aguirre Romero Elementary School in Ventanilla, Peru. Seabees assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 28 completed building a new classroom for the school in support of *Southern Partnership Station*.

Latin America involving information sharing with navies, coast guards and civilian services throughout the region. **AH**

Story by MCC(SW/AW) Aaron Strickland, High Speed Vessel Swift (HSV 2).

USS Constitution Gives Back to Veterans during Holiday Season

USS *Constitution* Sailors recently spread holiday cheer to veterans of the New England Center for Homeless Veterans (NECHV) in Boston.

Lt. Cmdr. Anthony Savage, USS *Constitution* executive officer; Chief Hospital Corpsman (SW/SS) Timothy Shaeffer; Gunner’s Mate Seaman Kali Morris, Master-at-Arms Seaman Gary Matthias; and Airman Sang Nguyen served Christmas dinner and talked to veterans as part of *Constitution’s* partnership with the NECHV.

“I enjoyed volunteering at the veteran’s center,” said Matthias. “Since it was my first Christmas in Boston, it felt good to spend time with them. It really opened my eyes to a world I have never seen before.”

Since establishing their partnership with the NECHV in April of this year, *Constitution’s* Sailors have lent 1,113 man hours helping veterans. They also served Thanksgiving dinner.

“It’s an honor for us to have this special partnership with the Sailors aboard USS *Constitution*,” said Steve Cuniff, NECHV director of community affairs. “The legacy of ‘*Old Ironsides*’ - having remained undefeated since her launch in 1797 – also provides a symbolic inspiration to veterans experiencing any kind of hardship; helping them to remember that a strong and united nation stands behind them to lend its support.”

USS *Constitution* Sailors participate in more than 50 volunteer projects annually. They were also winners of the Commander Navy Region Middle Atlantic Good Neighbor Flagship award for small shore commands, lending more than 3,000 hours of community service in 2010.

“The NECHV is there to help veterans who are suffering from any number of setbacks, including trauma, mental illness or unemployment,” said Savage. “*Constitution’s* partnership with the center allows our Sailors the opportunity to help these veterans, and the veterans at the center really appreciate seeing volunteers in uniform. I believe being with Sailors bolsters the pride in their service.”

Constitution, located in the Charlestown Navy Yard of Boston Harbor, is the world’s oldest commissioned warship afloat and welcomes more than 500,000 visitors a year. **AH**

Story and photo by MC3 Kathryn E. Macdonald, USS Constitution, Boston.

7th Fleet Band Cleans Beach in Japan

The U.S. 7th Fleet Band Far East Edition recently cleaned the Painagama Beach shoreline in Miyakojima, Japan, one day after the band arrived on the island for a friendship concert. The 23 band members are the most recent Sailors to visit the island since USS *Defender* (MCM 2) made a port call visit at Hirara Port in Miyakojima in the fall of 2010.

U.S. Consulate General Naha Deputy Principal Officer Claire Kaneshiro, said the consulate likes to do community service events whenever there is a military visit in the Okinawa prefecture of Japan, where there is no military installation.

“We coordinated with the city of Miyakojima and asked what would be a helpful community relations event for the city,” Kaneshiro said. “The city said they would like to do the beach cleanup.”

“This is a great grassroots example of our commitment to environmental protection,” Kaneshiro said. “While living in Japan we have access to world-class historic sites, amazing natural parks and beaches, and it is a great way of showing of how we view ourselves as part of the community.”

Lt. Cmdr. Anthony Savage, executive officer of USS *Constitution*, serves juice and chats to a veteran at the New England Center for Homeless Veterans in Boston, during a recent visit.





Photo by MC2 Kenneth R. Hendrix

MU1 Brian Nefferdorf (left), and MU3 Catherine Chauvot remove a tire from the bay at Painagama Beach on the island of Miyakojima during a beach cleanup community service project. The visit to Miyakojima recognized the 50th anniversary of the signing of the U.S. and Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security.

The Sailors devoted the early morning to the community service project, landscaping the white sandy beach and picking up trash.

Senior Chief Musician Joe Rundall, 7th Fleet Band senior enlisted leader and assistant director, said it was nice seeing the smiles on the Sailors faces as they picked up trash on the beach.

“It’s good to see them do other things than just play music, which is what they normally do all the time,” Rundall said. “Community service projects like this help keep Sailors sharp in the event of an actual humanitarian aid mission.”

MU3 Camellia Akhamie, a drummer for the 7th Fleet Band, said everything went well and this was the second time in her naval career that she took part in a beach cleanup.

“It shows the people who live in the area that we care about other places in the world,” Akhamie said. **AH**

Story by MC2(SW/AW) Kenneth R. Hendrix, Commander U.S. 7th Fleet.

Navy Launches First Aircraft Using Electromagnetic System

The Navy recently made history when it launched the first aircraft from the Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR), Lakehurst, N.J.,

test site using the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System (EMALS) technology.

The Navy has been using steam for more than 50 years to launch aircraft from carriers.

The Aircraft Launch and Recovery Equipment (ALRE) program recently launched an F/A-18E *Super Hornet* using the EMALS technology that will replace steam catapults on future aircraft carriers.

“This is a tremendous achievement not just for the ALRE team, but for the entire Navy,” said Capt. James Donnelly, ALRE program manager. “Saturday’s EMALS launch demonstrates an evolution in carrier flight deck operations using advanced computer control, system monitoring and automation for tomorrow’s carrier air wings.”

EMALS is a complete carrier-based launch system designed for *Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78) and future *Ford*-class carriers.

“I thought the launch went great,” said Lt. Daniel Radocaj, the test pilot from Air Test and Evaluation Squadron 23 (VX 23) who made the first EMALS manned launch. “I got excited once I was on the catapult, but I went through the same procedures as on a steam catapult. The catapult stroke felt similar to a steam catapult and EMALS met all of the expectations I had.”

The current aircraft launch system for Navy aircraft carriers is the steam catapult. Newer, heavier and faster aircraft will result in launch

energy requirements approaching the limits of the steam catapult system.

The mission and function of EMALS remains the same as the steam catapult; however, EMALS employs entirely different technologies. EMALS will deliver the necessary higher launch energy capacity as well as substantial improvements in system weight, maintenance, increased efficiency and more accurate end-speed control.

“I felt honored to be chosen as the shooter to help launch the first live aircraft tested on the new EMALS track at Lakehurst,” said Chief Aviation Boatswain’s Mate (Equipment) Brandon Barr, Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division Test Department, Lakehurst.

“It was very exciting to knowingly be a part of naval aviation history. Aviation Boatswain’s Mate (Equipment) 1st Class Hunsaker and Robinson, Aviation Boatswain’s Mate (Equipment) 2nd Class Williams, Wong and Simmons, were the Sailors on my team who worked together to help make this test a success. We all look forward to seeing this cutting edge technology deployed on the *Gerald R. Ford*.”

“I’m excited about the improvement EMALS will bring to the fleet from a capability and reliability perspective,” said Cmdr. Russ McCormack, ALRE, PMA-251, deputy program manager for future systems. “EMALS was designed for just that purpose, and the team is delivering that requirement.”

The system’s technology allows for a smooth acceleration at both high and low speeds, increasing the carrier’s ability to launch aircraft in support of the warfighter.

The system will provide the capability for launching all current and future carrier air wing platforms – lightweight unmanned to heavy strike fighters.

Engineers will continue system functional demonstration testing at NAVAIR Lakehurst. The team will expand aircraft launches with the addition of T-45 and C-2 aircraft in 2011. **AH**

Story courtesy of Naval Air Systems Command, Patuxent River.

USS Ronald Reagan Chiefs Help Out at Presidential Ranch

USS *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76) chief petty officers recently participated in a community service project at Rancho Del Cielo, in Santa Ynez, Calif. The ranch was once owned by the ship’s namesake, former President Ronald Reagan.



Vice Adm. Daniel P. Holloway, commander, U.S. 2nd Fleet, cuts the ribbon during the grand opening of the Willoughby Child Development Center aboard Naval Station Norfolk.

More than 25 chief petty officers completed several maintenance projects to help the upkeep of the land. *Ronald Reagan*’s chiefs have been helping out at the ranch since August 2006.

Event coordinator, Master Chief Electronics Technician Jim Ritch, said the event strengthened the already strong tie between the Ronald Reagan Ranch and *Ronald Reagan*’s chief’s mess.

“We did anything they asked us to do while we were there,” said Ritch. “It’s a huge property and there is so much to be done that we were just privileged to be there to help.”

The chiefs cleared a fallen tree, trimmed low-hanging branches, split nearly 10 cords of firewood, built walking paths, cleared riding trails, raked algae and weeds from a lake, as well as numerous other projects.

“There was a lot of teamwork and camaraderie going on,” said Chief Logistics Specialist Mario Moreno. “We saw what had to be done and we attacked it. We got the job done.”

According to Andrew Coffin, vice president and director of the Reagan Ranch, the property is managed by a non-profit organization funded entirely by private donations from around the country by those who are committed to preserving Rancho Del Cielo and sharing the lessons of Ronald Reagan’s life and ideas with today’s youth. He said the assistance provided

by the ship’s chiefs was greater than any dollar value that could be associated with their labor.

“The work that the chiefs do is incredibly important,” said Coffin. “When Ronald Reagan was president, countless government personnel worked on the ranch, including a battalion of Navy Seabees, who built roads and cleared trails. Today, we just have a single ranch manager on site. We work hard to be good stewards of the generous gifts that supporters provide for the preservation of the ranch, and the work the chiefs from USS *Ronald Reagan* do at the ranch helps us do exactly that.”

Beyond the sheer amount of work done, Coffin said he was more impressed by the quality of the work.

“The work the chiefs do is in a class by itself,” said Coffin. “From the very first work weekend in 2006, they were committed to working hard and getting the job done. I can say without hesitation that these are the most productive days that we have at the ranch all year.

“I’m confident that President Reagan would be both humbled and proud by the work that these American heroes do to help preserve and protect his beloved ranch home,” said Coffin.

Coffin’s sentiments were shared by Ronald Reagan Ranch Manager George Thompson.

“Working with the chiefs this weekend was fantastic,” said Thompson. “I always enjoy

having the chiefs here. They always work hard, and they do a lot of work to help us out with our projects.”

USS *Ronald Reagan*’s Command Master Chief Mark Rudes was proud yet humbled by the work done by the chiefs in his mess.

“It was humbling to see the chief’s mess come together and do such a huge amount of work for no other reason than to leave our mark on our namesake’s ranch,” said Rudes. “Listening to the stories of the men who worked with Ronald Reagan was especially humbling. Knowing that these gentlemen actually worked with the president put everything in perspective.”

The chief’s mess hopes to continue working with the ranch and carry on this tradition in the years to come. **AH**

Story by MCCS Dean Lohmeyer, USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76).

Naval Station Norfolk Opens New Child Development Center

Naval Station Norfolk recently opened a new child development center (CDC). The 32,000 square foot facility is certified as a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (L.E.E.D.), and cost \$9.3 million. This CDC has the ability to care for 306 children ages 6 weeks to 5 years old.

The building has seven infant rooms, seven pre-toddler rooms, six toddler rooms, four preschool rooms and a staff of 790 caregivers and support staff.

The grand-opening ceremony consisted of a ribbon cutting, guided tour and guest speakers including Capt. Mary Jackson, Naval Station Norfolk commanding officer.

“We have a beautiful facility here,” said Jackson. “We have providers who care about the children.”

Jackson said having a care provider service members can trust is crucial to morale.

Renee Grant, Willoughby CDC director, agreed with Jackson.

“Military families are able to drop their children off and go to work without worrying about child care,” Grant said. “We’re here to provide that quality child care.”

A second CDC is scheduled to open aboard Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek in late 2011. **AH**

Story by MCSN Deven B. King, Navy Public Affairs Support Element East, Norfolk.



JOHN LAWSON,
Landsman U. S. S. Hartford.

The Legacy of African American Sailors to the Civil War

Story by Lt. Laura K. Stegherr

African-American Sailors have served in every conflict fought by the United States since the Revolutionary War. In this year's celebration of Black History Month, we pay tribute to the generations of African-Americans who struggled with adversity to achieve citizenship.

Additionally, this year our nation will focus on a national theme of "African-Americans and the Civil War," honoring the contributions of nearly 186,000 African-Americans who served in the Union Army and Navy. Yet, until recently, little was known of the individual African-American Sailors who fought so valiantly during this war.

Then, in 1993, Howard University's Department of History launched the Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System. A team of researchers initiated a project to examine hundreds of thousands

of pages of naval records housed at the National Archives, Washington, D.C., for evidence about African-American Sailors.

Advised by a committee of experts in Civil War naval history, including the Navy History and Heritage Command, the National Park Service, the National Archives and the Smithsonian Institution, the researchers began to systematically piece together the history of African American Sailors in the Civil War Navy. Documents, such as surviving personnel records, rendezvous reports and ship's muster rolls, were compared with the Navy's Index to Service Histories prepared by the Navy Department during the World War II era to discover more about the lives of individual Sailors during America's bloodiest war.

At the start of the project, researchers assumed that only about 10,000 African-American Sailors had participated in the Civil War. As their investigation proceeded, researchers were surprised to discover that more than 18,000 African-American Sailors had served in the Navy during the war, almost twice the number they originally expected to find. Researchers were also astounded to discover that this number included more than a dozen African-American women.

During the course of the war, African-American Sailors comprised 15 percent of the total enlisted force and served on almost every one of the nearly 700 Union Navy vessels.

The database the researchers compiled also provides a fascinating look at the contributions of African-Americans to the more notable battles of the Civil War. For example, by searching for a list of African-Americans who served aboard certain vessels, researchers learned that three were assigned to USS *Monitor*, the Navy's first ironclad warship, when she sank in December 1862 off Cape Hatteras, N.C.

Another search revealed that 44 African-American Sailors served under Adm. David Glasgow Farragut aboard USS *Hartford* at the Battle of Mobile Bay in August 1864, and helped to bring the vessel to victory over the squadron of Confederate Adm. Franklin Buchanan.

Individual stories of heroism have also come to light as a result of the project. Eight African-American Sailors earned the Medal of Honor for their valor in Civil War battles. One was Landsman John Lawson, a member of the berth deck ammunition party aboard USS *Hartford*. Lawson, was seriously wounded in the leg by an enemy shell that killed or injured the rest of the six-man crew, but he continued to supply *Hartford's* guns throughout the rest of the battle, truly following Farragut's immortal words, "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!"

Today, this documentation project continues to shed light on the individual stories of perseverance and valor in the history of our fighting force. The National Parks Service's Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System can be accessed at www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/index.html. The Navy History and Heritage Command also maintains a website that documents African-American Navy experience, with research, primary documents and photos concerning African-American milestones in naval history, found at www.history.navy.mil/special%20Highlights/AfricanAmerican/african-hist.htm. **AH**

Stegherr is assigned to the Navy Diversity Directorate, Washington, D.C.



Photo by MSgt. Demetrius Lester

Trident Refit Facility Sailor Completes IA Assignment

Story by MC1 Erica R. Gardner

Being selected to support an Individual Augmentee (IA) assignment can be an exciting and challenging opportunity, and a Sailor who recently returned to the Trident Refit Facility Kings Bay, Ga., from an IA assignment, had the chance to describe his experience.

Machinist Mate 3rd Class Jeffrey Sweat, of Millen, Ga., was surprised to learn he had been chosen to represent the Kings Bay area Sailors at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, in June 2009. The thought of how he could contribute to the efforts in the region as a machinist mate crossed his mind but the hard-charging submariner moved forward.

"I'm an eager, goal-minded Sailor who strives to perform any task assigned to me in a professional and timely manner," said Sweat.

Sweat was trained by Army specialists to perform the duties equivalent of a corrections officer. By using leadership skills he learned in the Navy, and his ability to execute a proper watch in diverse conditions, Sweat oversaw the safety, custody and control of more than 250 detainees.

This training is very different than his training as a machinist mate aboard a submarine. A machinist mate is a jack-of-all-trades who assists in the day-to-day operations of the submarine.

"I took the training that was given to me by the Army and applied it to my assigned mission here," said Sweat. "This training led to the safeguarding detainees in a hostile environment.

One of Sweat's most memorable times in Afghanistan was when he was going to shower and his unit was attacked by mortar rounds. He saw one of those rounds land near his tent.

Many of the experiences Sweat encountered while in Afghanistan are totally foreign to Kings Bay area Sailors due to the differences in work environments and expectations. In Kings Bay, the Trident Refit Facility provides industrial support or incremental for the submarines to include the overhaul and repair of Trident submarines and for depot level overhaul of equipment in the Trident equipment replacement program.

"While deployed to Afghanistan, I was able to obtain my Corrections Officer License through the United States Military Apprenticeship Program (USMAP)," said Sweat.

Sweat used the opportunity to his advantage, by gaining skills and training that can be used to further his military leadership training.

The support of his family during his IA assignment helped him get through the deployment. He looked forward to the quality time he would spend with his family and playing basketball.

"I have several members of my family who served and are currently serving in the U.S. Army. I'm the only member who ventured into a different branch," said Sweat.

Sweat has served in the Navy for more than seven years and is currently assigned to Trident Refit Facility, Defense Ordnance Storage Facility (DOSF), in Kings Bay. He returned from his IA in May. **AH**

Gardner is assigned to Commander, Submarine Group 10, Kings Bay, Ga.



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